

## **Army staff sergeant earns Service Member of the Quarter honors**

*By Tech. Sgt. Andre Nicholson  
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An Information Systems Operator/Analyst at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) was named Service Member of the Quarter during the Quarterly Enlisted Awards ceremony in Sanford Auditorium, Friday.

Staff Sgt. Kevin Hayes, a nine-year Army veteran, and a Columbia, S.C. native, earned the

title of Enlisted Service Member of the Quarter for April thru June. Sergeant Hayes, who is married with three daughters, was made aware of his accomplishment in front of the entire brigade and a few distinguished faculty members.

A man a few words, Sergeant Hayes said he's just happy to represent the brigade and he's pleased to be honored.

Col. Charles Serio, USU Brigade Commander, presented Sergeant Hayes with a Brigade Medallion and a Certificate of Achievement for his hard work.



*Photo by HMI Jason Wright*

**Col. Charles Serio, USU Brigade Commander, congratulates Staff Sgt. Kevin Hayes for being recognized as the Service Member of the Quarter during the Enlisted Awards Ceremony Friday.**

Part of the process for being selected as the enlisted Service Member of the Quarter is going before a board of senior enlisted advisors. They each present the nominee with four questions ranging from military topics to current events.

In the past, there was a quarterly award winner from each respective service. However, this year began the overall enlisted Service Member of the Quarter and Sergeant Hayes is the second to be selected. HM1 Leandro Aguda, earned the award for January thru March 2005.

During the ceremony several other awards were also given to include recognition for Combined Federal Campaign workers, the 2005 USU Commencement detail workers, and HM1 Samuel McFall was presented with the USU Color Guard Member of the Quarter award.

A highlight of this quarter's ceremony was the guest speaker, retired Air Force Lt. Col. Barry Bridger. Mr. Bridger is a Vietnam veteran and a former prisoner of war (POW).

Mr. Bridger joined the Air Force in 1963 as a pilot of the F-4 Phantoms. He was shot down while flying a mission over North Vietnam in 1967 and went on to become a six-year POW. During his speech to the brigade, Mr. Bridger expressed his ordeal as a POW and shared his experience in a way that brought tears to the eyes of some.

“We were subjected to many things during those years,” Mr. Bridger explained. “But, the tougher it got, the better we became. They could very well change our behavior, but they couldn’t change our hearts and minds.”

Mr. Bridger returned to active service in 1973 and is the recipient of the: Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star with Valor, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters, and the Prisoner of War Medal.

He now travels the country spreading a message of courage, discipline and success in the face of diversity.

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**HM1 Samuel McFall (left), receives a Color Guard statue from Tech. Sgt. James Barnes, NCO in charge of the USU Color Guard, after announcing HM1 McFall as the Color Guard Member of the Quarter.**

*Photos by HM1 Jason Wright*

**Retired Air Force Lt. Col. Barry Bridger, addresses USU faculty and staff members during the Quarterly Enlisted Awards ceremony, Friday. Mr. Bridger spoke about his ordeal as a six-year Vietnam Prisoner of War.**

